

The Rev. Mr. Venn, from the Author

THE RIGHT TO LIFE.

A 56
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

JUNE 26, 1796,

BY

RICHARD RAMSDEN, M.A.

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

PART II.

CAMBRIDGE,

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EXOD. XX. 13.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

IN the argument, which shews the divine precept to be the only foundation of the most valuable human right, or in that, which contains the reasons for the precept*, it will hardly be thought a fault, whatever other defects they may have, that they suppose the Legislator to have man for his object, and the enactment to be the inhibition of murder and suicide. Even to have mentioned, that either argument stood on the foot of such preliminaries, so little to be questioned, would have then for that reason, required an excuse; and, perhaps, the same would be wanted for bringing such considerations now into notice, if the opportunity had not come for them to take rank, and to be allowed their turn. If it be their opportunity, from that shall things insignificant

* See the former Sermon.

nificant derive significance. The explanation of a law must propose the common, as well as unfold the hidden and skilful point. Those, whom a law protects, must form a part of it's meaning and it's commentary.

It has been said, that the Hebrew verb in the text, denoting to kill, is, when used in Scripture, generally applied to those cases, where the life of man is taken away*. Yet it is not pretended, that it is always so applied. And the interpretation, which on this account, makes the precept the protection of man alone, may be thought to sustain a loss, even by one exception. Nor will the exactness or precision of words at any time serve for a sure measure of doctrine. Human speech is impatient of restraint. It is in this sense, as well as in others, winged; it is prompt to overleap the confine of one signification only.

It has also been said, on the behalf of this restriction of the commandment in it's object, that the commandment belongs to the second table of the decalogue, and that that table comprizes the sum of our duty to our neighbour†. But it is probable, the
division

* Andr. Rivet, Oper. Theolog. Tom. i, p. 1376.

† Calvin. Institut. p. 83. Genev. 1550. A. Rivet. ibid. p. 1229. Secker's Lectures on the Catechism of the Church of England. Lect. xviii.

division of the decalogue into two tables, which is alluded to in this assertion, had respect to one or other only, of these ends, either the accommodation of Moses, who was to carry them in his hands down from the top of Sinai to the plain, or, to suit the size of their future repository, the ark. - If, however, it were allowed, that, in the invention of the two compartments, regard was had to another end, which is, the division of virtue into the duty to God, and the duty to our neighbour, still, that such was the aim of the inditer, is an assumption previous to the proof of the contents of the tables, when it ought to be a deduction from it. And therefore this assertion cannot here be deemed an argument.

The true, and perhaps, the only reason, why no living thing, but man, is the object of the law, is this; that it's protection had been long wholly withdrawn from the brute creation. At the fall it was withdrawn in part. Animals then began to die in sacrifice. At the deluge was lost all life's privilege. They then began to die also for man's convenience and daily food. From that period man is lord, together with God, of their life and being.

From ascertaining this restriction of the precept, we are naturally led, in the order of our thoughts and subject, to the things, it forbids. And these are murder and suicide; acts, differing from each other in one circumstance only, this being the extinction of life by the life's owner; that, it's extinction by another's violence. The transgression and the guilt, in both, are the same; nor, unless we be nice in differences, does the punishment differ, but in this. In the one case it commences on earth; man is joined with God in the pursuit of blood: in the other, it commences from the invisible judgement seat; God's arm is by itself in vengeance.

In the mention of murder and suicide, as the things forbidden, our explanation seems now to terminate. If the language be an interpreter, the law offers nothing more to the reader. It has, however, happened, that a sentiment of another sort, not bounding the law by this construction, is generally current. Most, if not all, approved commentators have held, that not only murder and suicide are prohibited, but anger having no cause, hatred, revenge, envy, malice, cruelty, and even words of malevolence, reproach,

reproach, or disdain. Neither is this the whole. The precept is thought to be imperative, as well as prohibitory, to enjoin such acts of kindness, as shall secure from injury, promote the livelihood, safety and welfare of our neighbour*.

On which interpretation we observe, in general, that it does not appear consistent with our notions of legislation, or, of the known benevolence and tried equity of him, who was in the present instance the legislator, that so much meaning, if so much were intended, should be expressed in words not seeming to teach it, that their real should lie so deep below their apparent import. We do indeed with reluctance advance this observation, because it is, or, is like, the argument oft upon the lip of contumacy and rebellion. It measures the divine conduct and appointments by our notions. We mean not so here; for, if this interpretation be the true, let God be true, man a liar.

If it could be shewn, in any subsequent part of the code, which was at this time delivered to Israel, that the commandment was said to take this extensive acceptance, the

* Calvin. *ibid.* p. 82. 109. A. Rivet. p. 1377. &c. Secker, *Lect.* xxiv,

the matter would be without dispute; or, even, if it could be shewn to have been the case in any other after regulation, whilst the same form of administration lasted, there would be less difficulty in admitting it. A legislator is at liberty in a subsequent part of the same code, to determine the meaning of a former ordinance. But no proof of this kind has been attempted. Such a comment does not appear in the books of Moses, or, even, in the whole of the Old Testament.

The appeal is to the New Testament only. But it is to be remembered, that this is an appeal to the time of a new or second lawgiver, to a new or second dispensation and code. And, supposing the passages here appealed to to warrant the appeal, the ancient Jew must be liberated from obedience to this precept in that construction of it. It can bind thus; it can be on the frontlet thus, in the new kingdom of righteousness only.

Yet perhaps, on an examination of the passages it may be justly doubted, whether the construction be obligatory on the Christian. His lawgiver's words are these, *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill,*

*kill, shall be in danger of the judgement: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgement; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.**

On which we observe, that there are expressions here, leading us to contrast and oppose, not to combine and gather under one, these rules of duty; to contrast the ancient teaching with the instruction of the then teacher of Israel. The intent of the speaker was, to hold up, in a way of disparagement, the less extensive obligation of the Jew, lying in a precept of a narrow slip, of a narrow bound, and to shew, in distinction from it, and, in a way of honour, the more extensive obligations of the Christian, in the broad, full scroll of Christ; to hold up, in some sort, to contempt, the parsimony of the old dispensation, and the niggardliness of it's virtue, when compared with the richness of the Christian œconomy, and the profusion of it's righteousness. This intention keeps the rules apart. The latter are new rules, not explanatory, but additional.

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* Matt. v. 21, 22.

To confirm this sentiment, we might mention the similar disparaging comparisons, which follow; in particular, the contrast between the law of retaliation in the Mosaic statutes, and the law of patience under assault in the Christian, between the law of hatred to an enemy, and the law of love*. In which instances we see two new statutes superseding and abolishing the old in disgrace, not, as in the instance before us, an addition of commandments, the supplement of a short rule. And it will, perhaps, be deemed no insignificant argument, that to love one another, is represented in the Gospel, as it's peculiar precept, is often repeated, is called *a new commandment* †.

The other passage appealed to is in the first epistle of St. John, and seems to be a better support of the opinion, we dispute, than the former. *Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer* ‡. Now it is acknowledged by all discreet interpreters of Scripture, that it's language, being popular, is frequently to be understood with abatement and restriction. It must also, we apprehend, be admitted by those, who are best skilled in the tendencies of human passions, that hatred, though it always aims a blow at another's

* Matt. v. 38.— 44.

† John xiii. 34.

‡ I John iii. 15.

another's happiness, yet not always strikes at the life. And therefore it is probable, that the hatred spoken of by St. John, is not every species of ill will, but the malevolence, which in it's direct intention and infallible tendency, seeks and hunts the life.

Under this limit, there can be no doubt, but that hatred bears the stamp of murder. It is the intent, it is the desire to kill. However the Jew might usually measure his guilt by the outward action, he was not ignorant, that the intention to kill, though unaccomplished, was a breach of the precept. Nor has our argument at all barred out the intention. Every name and denomination of vice, which is akin to hatred, such, as anger and spite, envy and revenge, when it drugs it's counsel with murder's purpose, takes it's whole taint, colour, and smell.

So far we have considered the prohibition of the commandment, and have endeavoured to shew, that it does not, as is maintained in this opinion, go beyond the ideas of murder and suicide. And, if what has been said be true, the other part of the opinion, which holds, that the commandment enjoins, as well as forbids, comes of

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course to nothing. Nor indeed has any appeal been made to Scripture in support of this notion. The argument used appears to be of this sort, that, as in positive precepts the contrary is forbidden, so in negative the contrary is enjoined*. But to forbid the contrary in a positive precept, is to forbid one of it's violations. Whilst the injunction of the contrary in a negative precept, is, in strictness, nothing more or less, than the prohibition itself. To forbid, to kill, and to enjoin, not to kill, which is the real contrary, are like propositions. In the account indeed of this precept other contraries have been assumed, such, as the saving of life, the securing from injury. But it is evident, these are not the real contraries.

At this point we return from a discussion, in some sort, digressive, to the original boundary, where it was proposed to fix the commandment, and terminate the explanation. Since, however, it is not unlikely, that, by opposition to a sentiment generally prevailing, disgust, or solitudes better than disgust, will be excited, it may be proper, from deference to those last feelings, to add the following remarks.

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* Calvin. p. 82. A. Rivet. p. 1229. Secker, Lect. xviii.

It may be thought, that this excluding comment derogates from the moral of the decalogue. But it is to be remembered, that the restriction of the sixth commandment, or, even, of all the ten, derogates nothing from other precepts of Scripture, prohibiting, or enjoining the things shut out from it or from them, but rather allows them their proper room, dignity and action. Nor are these few in number, which enjoin every species of mercy, and forbid every species of violence, which command to save life, to guard from harm, and forbid the thought and word of evil. Nor can they be rules of life of less authority. They are God's rules, though not heard in fire. The two great rules, *on which hang all the law and the prophets**, copied by Moses into a book; the precepts dropping from the Apostle's pen, or from the honeyed lips of Jesus, are as much God's rules, as those written by his own finger. Nor, as standing on the same authority, can they be inadequate to the purposes, for which the law is given. The comparison of the conduct with them must equally convince the sinner of transgression, and equally prove the believer's obedience.

* Deut. vi. 5. Levit. xix. 18. Matt. xxii. 36.—40.

obedience. And it is plain, they have equal sanctions. *Whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgement: whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgement**.

Another reflexion also, may possibly occur, that this argument seems to insinuate, that not the decalogue only, but the whole Mosaic dispensation is incomplete in the preceptive part. And we ask, why should that, which, in other respects, is imperfect, be complete in this? The second mediator and lawgiver was of great dignity; he came from heaven, from the bosom, and the throne of God. He had also, as well as Moses, authority to enact, and more than Moses, authority to annul. Himself too, the beauty of holiness, he can well carry the honour of teaching a perfect moral.

It is a point also of some moment, that, fewer the aids to virtue, fewer the rules, narrower and shorter the code: more the aids, more the height, length, depth and breadth of obedience. The ancient Jew walked in darkness, the disciple of Christ walks in light. On the heart of the one, the operation of the Holy Ghost was slow
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* Matt. v. 21, 22.

and feeble; on the heart of the other, it is an operation with a sword's edge, quick and piercing, and a mighty operation, as the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

In treating the three first topics of our subject, occasion has been given to mention the exceptions to the commandment, or, it's suspension in certain cases. And, if there be any truth in the remark, that the exception imparts vigour or genuineness to a rule, the omission of these cases would be the limner's fault, who omits the shade, which throws distinctness over his picture.

As the subjection of animals to man, even to the surrender of their life, has been fully adverted to, a repetition of that case is unnecessary.

The next is the case of the Canaanite, whom the hand of the conqueror was not to spare.

In which exception we see a resemblance to the former, both being a suspension of the commandment, or a withdrawing of it's protection by other commandments. The only difference in the cases, or, at least, the only difference, we are called upon to notice, is, that of the two excepting or suspensive commandments,

mandments, the one is an universal and perpetual permission to kill, the other, a permission limited to the sword of Israel, in the day of it's vengeance and victory.

To the exception of Israel's foldier, who fought in the armies of the living God, we may now add the case of him, who kills, and exposes himself to the extremities of death, under other banners. This indeed, is an exception, not having a proof so nigh, as the two preceding, because on this point there is no exprefs declaration. But the innocence of every other foldier, if not so easily shewn, is still as clear, as that there is no stain on his hand, who hewed down Amalek's king, or on that hand, which smites the lamb that licks it.

The expedience of government being admitted, the division of authority, without which, a man would find it irksome to govern even one more than himself, becomes, like the division of employment in art's chamber, very much the trial and the specimen of human skill and prudence. It is true, the moral feelings have a concern in this division; but it is chiefly, to soften the rigours of the authority, to exhibit it's strength to the violence, it opposes, as hav-
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ing less of what is animal or brutal in it, as being a portion of the strength of that Governor, in whom are united omnipotence and mercy, and, by this appearance, to foorth into subjection and peace. The moral feelings are here, what the noble temper and natural dignity of the lion are to his rule in the forest, to his more valid pretensions to dominion, his might and his roar.

It is then, chiefly, the skill of man, which is put to one of it's best tests in making a just division of the authority, which is to govern. He is to parcel out in separate allotments, and in different proportions and combinations the wisdom and the strength of the state: they are to be so parcelled out, as to be effectual checks to the noxious effervescence of human passions, as that every encroachment may have it's peculiar curb, and every species of violence it's proper terror, and punishment. To some, who are to govern, are to be assigned, little more than their own personal strength, and much counsel. The judge is to carry the white wand only. To others are to be assigned, less of the state's counsel, and more of it's force. The staff is not the ensign, merely, of authority; it may be used to repress and
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to strike. To others is to be assigned the state's force alone, none of the counsel. These, are, the muscle and the nerve. These move to another's will. They compose, what we may call, the animal or brutal force of human government. Their authority, is, the bayonet and the cannon; the cell, the bolt, and the chain.

In this partition of the authority of government, we are now at no loss to discern the class, to which the soldier belongs. Raised to a subordinate magistracy, he is the state's force only; subject to the state's will, not his own. And, whatsoever be the plea for the whole of the authority of government, the same must be the plea of a part. The privilege of the whole, or, of any part, must be the privilege of each. If there be any magistrate in a state God's minister, a title once given from God * to the bloody, usurping, patrolling fasces of the Roman republic; to governors, dividing and controuling, among themselves and a merciless emperor, all the animal strength of man, considered as a barbarian; to men, whose eye on the tribunal of justice was the eye of the tiger in ambush; if there be any magistrate in a state God's minister, so must the

* Rom. xiii.

the soldier be. If the judge using the state's will and wisdom in his decisions, bear from God his licence to condemn, so the licence to kill in battle is from God. If the soldier point the cannon at a seditious multitude, or, at the ranks of a foreign foe, he points it in the name of God.

Hence it appears, that the soldier has nothing to do with the rapacity, injustice, or ambition, which prompt the will of the state. He is excluded from that counsel and will; he has no such intent. The state is the mover, he the engine. He may be, in himself, a man of mercy. He may be a generous soldier; he may weep over the city sacked; he may console the wounded prisoner, and dry up the tears of his comrade's widow and children. But, as the goaler can pity and console only, cannot liberate, so the soldier, if ordered to destroy, can pity only, cannot spare. As to shut up in reserve, even a martyr of Christ's, is no blame to the keeper of the dungeon, so there is no stain on the soldier in spilling the blood of the innocent. The fault, if any, lies elsewhere, on that part of the government, which is the will and intention.

In admitting the expedience of govern-

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ment, we admit the reasons for it, and the conditions, on which it's authority is assumed. If one of it's main reasons be the opposing of strength, in it's appointment and contrivance made lawful, to other strength, which passions, disregarding the arm of the invisible governor, bring into action, he, that puts on the robe of rule, is exposed to risk and danger. His robe is liable to be torn and rent, or, to be thrust through with the dagger. To hear loud clamour, to shrink at the secret threat, to sustain assault, or, to die in the seat of power, are the conditions of authority. The very painter has told us this by his emblems, by the growling monsters chained beneath the throne, by the snakes hissing from under the footstool. These are conditions annexed to authority by the same appointment, which gives it. Himself, in the place of God, God's assisting partner in the controul of forbidden strength, the magistrate puts his person between God and the people. If there be a frenzy breaking through, he dies in lieu of God.

When the King waves his sceptre to put in motion all the strength and wisdom of the state, it is the signal also, for folly and discord

discord to speak, for calumny to shoot it's arrow, for sedition to lay hold of the hilt of it's dagger. Nor always can the fair beauty of justice, or her frown, awe down the noise and the strife. The madness of the people has often done them wrong. The white wand, which cannot hurt, has been broken. If we go to the keeper of the prison, we find his hours, hours of anxiety and watchfulness. He stands between his neighbour and the plunderer, between the judge and the man of violence. And the bolt and the chain are not always sufficient.

The soldier is exposed to still greater risk. The violence, of which he is the check, is more menacing and more formidable. He stands between the King, and his enemies. But his greater risk, like the lesser risk of the others, is the risk of duty. As it is the main article and condition of the authority, with which he is invested, that he carry his life in his hand, and deposit it in the field at the will of the state, so his open, dauntless breast, so his boldness in marching up to the cannon's mouth, are, a courage and magnanimity, which God approves, so his scars are honoured of God as well as of man.

If the soldier fall in accomplishing ambition's vow, or in promoting the triumphs of rapine, so far as he is concerned, he is as the engine perishing in the use, he is as the lance snapping in the hands of the thrower. The fault of his death is not his own; it is not the fault of suicide. That fault, the waste of his blood, the waste of the state's strength, is the fault of the mind of the state.

The case of self defence, which is the fourth exception to the commandment, we define to be, where the intention of the assailant to kill is clear and evident, and where the attack is such, as to leave no means of preservation, but in his death. Now, if the state has, in these circumstances, granted the power to kill, the slayer is armed with God's and the state's vengeance, and is guiltless. Yet, if the legislature has omitted this provision, he is still armed with God's. The right to life is forfeited. The slaughter is judicial. *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed*.*

If however, it should be doubted, as it has been, whether it were not better, in these circumstances, to lose than to take life, there is still a law of compassion, which
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* Gen. ix. 6.

may save from condemnation. It is a law provided for those extremities, where the pique of the feelings is unable to brook the restraint of duty. Even oppression is said to madden the wise*, and it is the only extenuation of any loud menacing cry for privileges, or liberty. But the pinching risk of life may shew the acquittal, once granted to the transgression of hunger's call: *I will have mercy and not sacrifice†.*

Yet here let there be no misapprehension. The duellist is a murderer. He is more. His offence against the commandment is its double breach. His guilt is the guilt of murder and suicide.

The avenger, neither of the state's, nor God's wrong, he takes up the weapon of death, a weapon, formed for no other than the purposes of death; after many a wish, perhaps, that there had been no quarrel, no affront, or law of honour; after many a pang, perhaps, at leaving the connexions, and objects, dear to him; perhaps too, after many a heaving of his breast at the prospect of a future retribution. Under these circumstances, he turns away from the weapon in his hand; and would lay it aside, were it not for a counter inclination, weighing

* Ecclesiastes vii. 7.

† Matt. xii. 7.

weighing down the scale, which contains his wishes, pangs, and fears. The preponderance is in favour of the demands of fashion, and of the scorns and frowns of men. Under these circumstances, he makes another choice; it becomes his final determination to hold the weapon fast, and brave the issue.

It is scarce necessary to add, that, in this determination, the crime is clear. It is the will prompting the deed; it is the purpose of the double crime.

The case of capital punishments, which is the last exception to the commandment, will perhaps, be thought, not so much to want a plea for it's toleration, as a plea, which shall justify. It will be allowed, that there are aggression and enormity, by which the perpetrator becomes so unsightly, as that his name ought no more to be heard amongst the living; that there are instances of a propensity to evil in the human mind, as ferocious, and as ungovernable, as the hunger of the beast of prey, or, the spite of the trodden viper; and that the destruction of the man, is, as that of the animal, unworthy of pity. Whilst at the same time, if these instances be not crimes of blood,
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the penalty will be thought, a matter to be connived at, rather than vindicated. Referring to the divine institute at the deluge, it will seem, that death is the last, and only vengeance for murder.

The advocate for the introduction of capital punishments in other offences, besides murder, will not give much weight to the example of the Jewish commonwealth. It may be said, that example is no rule, and that, as the statutes and sanctions of that government were dictated by God himself, it will be necessary for other states to shew a like interposition for like regulations. And the force of these observations must be allowed, excepting, in the latter, so much of it, as intends a denial of the divine interference, altogether, to justify the practice of other nations. Their plea is the divine interference, though not direct and immediate.

Government is power. Being an ordinance of God, it is a moral power. It is moral, in itself, as standing on the same authority with every other commandment. It is also a power for moral purposes. It is to assist and enforce all other ordinances, both it's own, and those, which are peculiarly,

liarly, God's. It is the guardian, overshadowing ordinance of all these other ordinances. It is like the overshadowing canopy of the heavens. It is a power, like the power of God, decked and ornamented with rewards, fenced and aggrandized with terror and punishments. It is a part of the power of God. If ever there should appear on earth a power, taking any other basis, than God's commandment, and professing to recede from this union and partnership with his power, in proportion as it does this, it knits itself to the powers of Hell. If ever there should appear on earth a power, entirely disclaiming this union, it becomes entirely satanic. The abettor of this power is in the croud, that comes with Christ's adversary.

But not to break our argument from its conclusions, by an intruding, painful reflexion on the use, to which the sword, the staff, and the spear, may again be put, we see hence, that there may be in a state, offences of a deeper die, than murder itself. There may be offences, the blackness of which chiefly consists in being offences against this tremendous, awful ordinance, *a running on the thick bosses of God's buckler**. And this is worse, than murder.

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* Job xv. 26.

We hence also see, why, independently of the command to Noah, murder is capital. The power of every state lies much in the life of the subject.

Neither let it be presumption to draw from hence a plea for the capital punishments, even of theocracy itself. In the theocracy the ruler was himself in some sort, present; his benedictions were audible, his curses visible; his wonders, the wonders of the Almighty, were seen, known, and felt. But sorcery was a direct usurpation of these, his presence, prerogatives, and power. And, as the Jewish government, considered apart from the awe, which the cloud on the tabernacle inspired, and the mandates, which issued from it, was weak and feeble, the authority of a governor was delegated to the parents of every tent throughout the camp. To curse a parent was revolt. Nor is the reason obscure, why adultery was death. A mother in Israel, was not only a nurse, but a governess, to the state. The offence was mutiny.

Neither let it be obtrusion to call into notice, how the penalty of death drops off from some crimes, when under different circumstances, how others rise to a malignity

nity deserving it, and how new, or unheard of crimes are born bringing it along with them. In all states indeed, rebellion is, as was forcery in Israel, and the insurgent's doom the same, and equally just. Yet even here, there is a difference. In those states, which are free, or, where the power is much divided, the crime is less easy to be proved, or less capable of taking a terrific shape, than in those, which are despotic. And consequently in the former, the rebel's punishment is less frequent, than in the latter. Whilst on the other hand, there is with us, a crime followed by death, which a despot shall not know, or shall despise. The Turk, if he knows of forgery, must despise it. Yet rebellion in his domains has not cut the sinews of his power more, than forgery cuts England's. Murder itself is scarce more heinous. And even on the malignancy of that death-stricken crime shall the population of a country have an influence. With the population shall fluctuate the value of the life of a subject. We might suppose examples, where the climate or the soil gives occasion to a law of death. The monopolist usurper of a well of water, would, in Arabia, be her worst robber.

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The wandering tribes would for once, well combine to redeem it by his blood. In the divine government, at this period, dishonour to parents, adultery, and witchcraft are sunk into the class of those crimes, which provoke the indignation, not the jealousy, of the Omnipotent. The pretender to dreams, and the false prophet have now, little more than the shame and the portion of liars. There is now, in God's kingdom, only one unpardonable death sin. And even the death of that sin is not visibly inflicted on the offender, though it does, what no other does. It shakes the kingdom in the very foundations of its power. It allows it no subjects.

Upon these considerations it is now not difficult to ascertain the limit to capital punishments. Whatsoever force or contrivance, adapting itself to the circumstances of a state, either covertly undermines, or openly outrages that, in which its strength and power mainly consist, of this sufficiently proved, the proper doom is death. In all instances, to which this description applies, the commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*, is suspended; the offender dies by an ordinance superseding it.

It is the glory of God, as it is the glory of the King, to pass by a transgression. But then the transgressions, they pass by, are transgressions on their justice or on their mercy, not those on their power. They shall, neither of them, hear the murmur at the award of justice, nor the blasphemy on their mercy. They shall, each of them, even forgive every insult on his Son and Heir. It is seemly for justice to bear, with unruffled tranquillity, the sound of the teeth gnashed. It is seemly for mercy to offer her embrace, even when unsolicited, or despised. But it is not seemly for power to do so. Indeed, strength cannot forgive opposing and confronting strength. If it could have such a feeling, to forgive, is, to yield: it is the assailant's victory. The lion never ceases from the conflict, till his adversary lie for dead. No more will the lion of the tribe of Judah, the bruiser of the serpent, Jesus Christ. Satan has struggled; has carried off a spoil; has left a scar on the beauty and strength of heaven's monarchy. And he shall never be redeemed to God. The "Thrones and Dominations" of light shall never come to a compromise with the Powers of darkness. So the King shall

shall never forgive a rival aggression on the state's strength, in whatever shape it may appear, whether in open array or in ambuscade, whether in forgery or treason, in rebellion or murder.



In the former Sermon, p. 10. line 24. dele 'only'
and after 'it' line 25. read, 'though not for that transgression only.'

(2)
shall never forgive a rival aggression on the
state's strength, in whatever shape it may
appear, whether in open array or in ambush-
case, whether in forgery or treason, in
rebellion or murder.



In the former German p. 13. line 25. only
and after 'ie' line 25. read 'though not for that reason'
Grafton only.